
MINUTES
AZUSA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION
GOVERNANCE WORKSHOP
Saturday, June 5, 2021, at 9:00 a.m.

The Azusa Unified School District Board of Education met via Teleconference for the Governance Workshop.

1.0 Preliminary

A) Call To Order

1.1 The Board President will call the Board of Education Meeting of the Azusa Unified School District to Order

Board President, Gabriela Arellanes, called the Governance Workshop to order at 9:00 a.m.

B) Flag Salute

1.2 Flag Salute

Recommendation: It is recommended that all rise for the flag salute.

Hailey Thomson, a Dalton student, led the audience in the Flag Salute.

C) Roll Call

1.3 Roll Call

It is recommended the Board President take roll call.

Gabriela Arellanes	Present
Sabrina Bow, Ed.D.	Present
Xilonin Cruz-Gonzalez	Present
Adrian Greer	Absent
Yolanda Rodriguez-Peña	Present

2.0 Approval of Agenda

2.1 Approval of Agenda

Recommendation: It is recommended the Board of Education approve the agenda order and content.

ORIGINAL - Motion

Member (**Yolanda Rodriguez-Peña**) Moved, Member (**Sabrina Bow, Ed.D.**) Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'It is recommended the Board of Education approve the agenda order and content'. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: **4** Nay: **0**. The motion **Carried. 4 - 0**

Gabriela Arellanes	Yes
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Sabrina Bow, Ed.D. Yes
Xilonin Cruz-Gonzalez Yes
Yolanda Rodriguez-Peña Yes

3.0 Items From the Floor/Public Comment on Agenda or Non-Agenda Items

3.1 Public Comment on Agenda or Non-Agenda Items

This is an opportunity for the public to address the Board of Education on agenda or non-agenda items. Individual speakers may be allowed up to three (3) minutes to address the Board of Education on any agenda or non-agenda items. To address the Board of Education, please raise your hand while in the Zoom attendance.

4.0 General Functions

A) Board Governance Workshop

4.1 Governance Workshop

The Board of Education believes it is important to periodically review effective governance procedures for continued development. Effective governance procedures are indicators of a high-performing School Board and District. Staff from our legal firm, Fagen Friedman & Fulfrost, will facilitate this Governance Workshop.

Recommendation: It is recommended the Board of Education participate in a Governance Workshop to discuss effective governance procedures.

Superintendent Ortega introduced Terilyn Finders, facilitator for the Governance Workshop. Terilyn began the meeting addressing the Board of Education's request to discuss how all Board of Education meetings will be viewed, including Study Sessions and Governance Workshops. The Board of Education decided this topic would be agendized next school year for further discussion, but that this meeting would not be recorded or posted to YouTube.

Terilyn Finders

The purpose of today's discussion is to make sure your Handbook is up to speed. First, I would like the group to take a moment and think of a word that describes your COVID pandemic experience. What pleasantly surprised you?

Arturo Ortega

The first thing that comes to mind is leadership, from students, parents, classified staff, certificated staff, and administrators.

Gabriela Arellanes

I was pleasantly surprised at our District adapting to the protocols put in place, following protocol. It's been a challenge, and our District has been creative.

Sabrina Bow Ed.D.

The phrase that comes to mind is resilience—a focus on what's important, a lot of things are important all the time. I think, in particular, this year has really narrowed or paired away all the extra. We found what worked actually this year; we've really honed in on what is truly important to us as a district community.

Yolanda Rodriguez-Peña

The word that comes to mind for me is Proud. I'm so proud of Azusa Unified School District. Everything looks different, but we still had graduation and awards assemblies.

Xilonin Cruz-Gonzalez

I was thinking experimentation. I think that people did a lot of interesting things. There was a lot of trying new things. Our district recognized that and capitalized on it, including the planning for the upcoming school year. Also, giving our teachers training, so my word is experimentation.

Jorge Ronquillo

My one word is selflessness. This year has tried us in ways that many of us in leadership roles have never been tried before. And resilient, we've had to be selfless and resilient.

Latasha Jamal

My one word would be trust. Being the new one to the team and not even a product of Azusa. As a cabinet, we had to make team decisions that impacted a lot. All levels of leadership made me feel welcomed by trusting the ideas that the leaders were putting forth.

Dayna Mitchell Ed.D.

My word is innovate. Just seeing the way that the staff and the students have embraced this technology. They made a tremendous shift, and there are many things from this that we will learn that we will continue to do something and some things we won't.

Communication

1. The Superintendent and Board Members commit to open dialogue with one another.
2. The Superintendent will provide relevant, timely, and thorough information to Board Members through the weekly Board Memo.
3. In order to ensure that all Board Members receive the same information and to keep the Superintendent informed of Board Members' questions and concerns, requests for information should come to the Superintendent and/or the appropriate Cabinet member. All Board Members will receive the information if requested during a Board Meeting.
4. The Superintendent can be reached by email, cell phone (call or text), or office phone if a Board Member needs to reach the Superintendent.
5. Board Members understand the distinction between Board and staff roles and will refrain from performing management functions that are the responsibility of the Superintendent and staff.

6. The Superintendent and Board Members commit to avoiding surprises to the Governance team and staff.

Superintendent Ortega explained his process regarding items 1-3. Board Member Bow suggested the language should be modified to reflect the practice currently in place. Board Member Bow expressed her appreciation to the Superintendent regarding how Board Members receive information and how it is archived for future reference.

Board member role in public

1. Board Members are encouraged to be visible at schools and in the community. Board Members, in their official capacity, visiting classrooms at a school are requested to inform the Superintendent and Principal in advance.
2. If the media reaches out to Board Members they should:
 - a) Refer them to the Communication Office and/or the Superintendent
 - i. Possible responses:
 1. Thank you for reaching out; let me refer you to our Director of Communications. She can be reached at any time at 626 506-9809
 2. That is a great question; let me refer you to our Superintendent; he can be reached at 626 858-6152
 3. I appreciate the opportunity to respond to your questions; let me refer you to our Director of Communications. She can be reached at any time at 626 506-9809
 - b) Contact the Superintendent, the Board President, and Superintendent/designee are the official spokespersons for the District.
3. Individual Board Members represent the District in an official capacity only when they are appointed by the Board in the capacity.
4. Board Members should be careful in their use of social media to ensure that all communications support the vision and mission of the school district. Board Members should not comment on matters upon which the Board has not decided; decisions that have been made by the Board but with which they disagree personally; or confidential matters.

Board members go over the process of visiting a school site. Terilyn comments this meeting is to go over procedures and protocols. The Board Members and Superintendent clarify the process regarding visiting schools sites and responding to the media. Board Members would like to work on the language regarding responses to the media. The Board feels that all Board Members are responsible in regards to social media.

Handling Concerns

1. The Board and Superintendent are committed to having parent and/or staff concerns handled at the lowest possible level in the organization, where those involved in the issue can resolve the matter.
2. Board Members will refer parent or staff concerns to the Superintendent; the concern will be investigated in a timely manner, and Superintendent and/or appropriate

Cabinet member will respond and communicate back to the complainant and the Board Member.

3. A Board Member forwarding a complaint will not be perceived as endorsing the complaint.

The Board of Education requests a stock answer when being approached with off-limits questions. The Board of Education always wants to let the community know that their concerns are important while avoiding off-limit topics. Superintendent Ortega shared his response to these questions. He explained that he always responds, ensuring that the message was received and expressing appreciation for the concern.

Prior to Board Meetings

1. Board Members will thoroughly read materials before the board meeting and will make every attempt to contact the Superintendent with any questions they have on the agenda at least 24 hours before the meeting.
2. Board Members' questions will be answered in advance of the Board meeting.
3. Board Members will not discuss items that the Board will be acting on with more than one other Board Member.
4. Board Members will make an effort to notify the Superintendent in advance of their intent to remove an item from the consent calendar.

Referencing a previous Board meeting, Board Member Rodriguez Peña would like to see the Board work on number 4. She feels that the Board should be more mindful of time.

Board Meetings

1. All Board Members will have an opportunity to speak to any items on the agenda, and the Board President will acknowledge individual Board Members prior to making a comment.
2. Each Board Member will respect the right of the other Board Members to hold an opposing point of view and, following a Board vote, will respect the decision made by the Board.
3. All Board Members and cabinet members will be respectful to each other, to presenters, and to attendees, and recognize the impact of comments and tone made in public toward one another. If at any time there is a concern, the Board President and/or Superintendent will work to resolve the issue prior to the next Board Meeting.
4. Study sessions will be scheduled throughout the year on issues that require extensive discussion.
5. Board and management team members will remain engaged at all meetings and avoid distractions not related to the meeting.
6. Board Members will attend all scheduled Board meetings unless there is an extenuating circumstance.
7. Board Members will attempt to be ready to begin the meeting at least five minutes prior to the Board Meeting start time.

Upon reviewing Board Meetings number 5, Board Member Bow suggested a reminder to turn off electronic devices and avoid texting before the start of the meeting.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Can a Board Member attend bargaining unit member meetings?
 - a. Yes, Board Members may attend bargaining unit member meetings in the spirit of building relationships
 - b. As always, closed session items may not be discussed at such meetings
2. If a Board Member is at a school function, should they inform the administrator that they are there?
 - a. Yes, it is a good practice that they alert the site administrators.
3. How does a Board Member request that an item be agendized on a Board Meeting?
 - a. Board Members should submit a request to the Board President and/or Superintendent to be added to the next feasible Board meeting.
4. When can a Board Member request that something be on a future agenda?
 - a. Board Members may request that an issue be agendized by making a request to the Board President or Superintendent prior to a Board Meeting and/or at a Board meeting. The item will be placed for discussion at a subsequent Board meeting, and staff will prepare an appropriate background.
5. What should I do in the event of a conflict among governance team members?
 - a. If at any time there is a concern, you should contact the Board President and/or Superintendent to work on resolving the issue prior to the next Board meeting.
6. What do I do if I want to ask a question from our legal firm?
 - a. No Board Member, except the Board President, can contact the legal firm unless authorized by a majority of the Board.
 - b. If you have a question, you can contact the Board President and/or Superintendent.
 - c. Here is the language from BB 9124 Attorney:
 - i. At his/her discretion, the Board President, Superintendent, or designee, may confer with district legal counsel subject to any limits or parameters established by the Board. In addition, the Superintendent or Board President may contact district legal counsel to provide the Board with legal information or advice when so directed by a majority of the Board.
 - ii. Individual Board Members other than the Board President may not seek advice from district legal counsel on matters of district business unless so authorized by a majority of the Board.

Reviewing number 2, Board Members wanted clarification regarding the protocol for being at a school function. Superintendent Ortega felt that the protocols in number 2 are appropriate. He stated that the more information he and a site administrator has regarding visitors on their campus is beneficial. Finally, Board Members wanted to clarify the consequences to a Board Member for breaking protocol. Board President Arellanes requested these consequences be a part of the Handbook. Terilyn will work on adding today's suggestions to the Handbook.

Terilyn concluded the meeting with a question for the Board Members and Cabinet. Please describe the characteristics of a great boss using 5 words.

Gabriela Arellanes

Trustworthy, ability, honesty, good communicator.

Sabrina Bow Ed.D.

Effective, empathetic, active listener, able to evaluate, acts in the team's best interest.

Yolanda Rodriguez-Peña

Friendly, transparent, knowledgeable, good communicator, and a good listener.

Xilonin Cruz-Gonzalez

Honest, trustworthy, good listener, and gives good feedback.

Jorge Ronquillo

Trustworthy, motivator, honest, thoughtful, reliable.

Latasha Jamal

Knowledgeable, understanding, direct, open to change, organized.

Dayna Mitchell Ed.D.

Empathetic listener, trust builder, collaborative leader, strong communicator, visionary.

Arturo Ortega

Communicative, collaborative objective, giver.

Terilyn addressed the Board of Education regarding committees. Board Members wanted to review this topic. Upon further discussion by the Board of Education, it was agreed to discuss committees at the next Governance Meeting, August 10, 2021. Board President Arellanes asked the Superintendent to remind Board Members of these meetings to avoid scheduling conflicts.

5.0 Adjournment

5.1 Adjournment

Recommendation: It is recommended the Board of Education approve the adjournment of the Board Governance Workshop.

By consensus, the Governance Workshop adjourned at 12:17 p.m.

ORIGINAL - Motion

Member (**Sabrina Bow, Ed.D.**) Moved, Member (**Yolanda Rodriguez-Peña**) Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'It is recommended the Board of Education approve the

adjournment of the Board Governance Workshop'. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: **4** Nay: **0**. The motion **Carried. 4 - 0**

Gabriela Arellanes Yes
Sabrina Bow, Ed.D. Yes
Xilonin Cruz-Gonzalez Yes
Yolanda Rodriguez-Peña Yes



Clerk